



STATE OF TEXAS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

RICK PERRY
GOVERNOR

May 25, 2007

07 MAY 25 PM 6:32
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Robert Haney, Chief Clerk
Texas House of Representatives
State Capitol Room, 2W.29
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Mr. Haney:

Pursuant to his powers as governor and chief executive officer of the state of Texas, Governor Rick Perry has reviewed the following and in accordance with Article IV, Sections 14 and 15 of the Texas Constitution, has disapproved and thereby vetoed the following legislation:

House Bill No. 770 by Dutton

The Governor has also issued a message to the members of the Legislature concerning this piece of legislation. A copy of both the message and the original enrolled House Bill No. 770 is attached to this letter of transmittal.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "G. Davidson".

Gregory S. Davidson
Executive Clerk to the Governor

GSD/gsd

Attachments

P. O. Box 12131 • Capitol Station • Austin, Texas 78711

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY OF STATE
10 PM O'CLOCK

MAY 25 2007
A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Roger Williams".
Secretary of State



07 MAY 25 PM 6:33

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OFFICIAL MEMORANDUM
STATE OF TEXAS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
MESSAGE

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
THE EIGHTIETH TEXAS LEGISLATURE, REGULAR SESSION:

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 14 of the Texas Constitution, I, Rick Perry, Governor of Texas, do hereby disapprove and veto House Bill No. 770 of the 80th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, due to the following objections:

House Bill No. 770 requires the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) give written notice to each convicted felon released from prison, or whose parole or probation ends, that they are eligible to vote, and requires the Texas Department of Criminal Justice to provide former inmates with a voter registration form. This legislation is objectionable for several reasons. First, registering former inmates to vote is not within the mission of TDCJ. Their role is to incarcerate and rehabilitate offenders, and we should not divert resources away from this difficult task by mandating that TDCJ register inmates that are leaving the system or track down each convict when their parole or probation is over to encourage them to vote. In the 78th regular session, I vetoed a similar piece of legislation, House Bill No. 1517, that was less onerous than this – it required that the state post notice to released felons of their right to vote. Second, the state does not currently provide this service to law-abiding citizens, such as high school graduates who are new to voting. I find it unseemly that the state would make a greater effort to register former inmates to vote than we would any other group of citizens in this state. Third, when an individual is released from prison and their rights are restored, it is imperative that they take personal responsibility for all aspects of their life, including their right to vote. Lastly, nothing in current law precludes any political party or organization from organizing a voter registration drive among released convicts. In fact, a large amount of resources is dedicated each election cycle to registering Texans not currently on the voter rolls. But government should not make it a greater priority to register to vote those who broke our laws than those who have abided by them.

Since you remain gathered in regular session and continue to conduct formal business, I am delivering this disapproval message directly to you along with the official enrolled copy of the bill.



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I
have signed my name officially
and caused the Seal of the State
to be affixed hereto at Austin,
this 25th day of May, 2007.

Rick Perry
RICK PERRY
Governor of Texas

ATTESTED BY:

Roger Williams
Roger Williams
Secretary of State

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY OF STATE
10:23 O'CLOCK

MAY 25 2007
Roger Williams
Secretary of State